

Social Sciences Coordinating Committee: General Process Suggestions for the Sustained Assessment

The USGCRP Social Sciences Coordinating Committee reviewed the Third National Climate Assessment and developed this set of suggestions for the General Process of carrying out the Sustained National Climate Assessment and future Quadrennial Reports.

Selection of Author Teams:

- **Why this is important:** A diverse and multidisciplinary author team is better positioned to synthesize chapters that meet the NCA mission.
- Suggestions:
 - Use an open nomination process that stresses the importance of team skills
 - Include at least two social scientists from different disciplines on author teams
 - Select authors that either have interdisciplinary experience working across both the physical and social sciences OR are motivated to gain those experiences and skills
 - Use cross-chapter “tiger teams” to provide expertise and ensure consistency (e.g., regarding use of scenarios)
 - Choose authors from socioeconomically disadvantaged states/communities
 - Choose authors from diverse career stages
- Examples of where this has been done well:
 - NCA3 Coasts chapter (team was geographically diverse; included social, physical, ecological scientists...)
 - NAS: [Enhancing the Effectiveness of Team Science](#)

Professional Development for Authors:

- **Why this is important:** This will provide NCA authors with a toolkit that enables them to work together as effective teams and meet the needs of the Nation.
- Suggestions:
 - Include several professional development modules, widely accessible, with both “live” and written resources.
 - Possible topics:
 - Team science and collaborative skills
 - Consistent treatment of risk, valuation, scenarios, certainty, and other topics
 - Communication (report writing and outreach)
- Examples of where this has been done well:
 - Communication training for NCA3 authors, NCADAC, Climate and Health Assessment draft
 - Climate and Health Assessment author team meeting (September 2014)
 - NAS: [Enhancing the Effectiveness of Team Science](#)

- Team Science [Resources from SciTS Conference](#)

Consider Alternate Definitions for Regions:

- **Why this is important:** Region should encompass areas that are climatically, culturally, and economically cohesive. Evidence from NCA3 indicate strong reader interest in regional information.
- Suggestions:
 - Keep regions similar to NCA3
 - In general, use state boundaries to delineate regions
 - Some shifts may be desirable based on economy or culture
 - Consider splitting the Great Plains North/South (between NE and KS)
 - Consider putting Northern CA with NW region and put the rest of CA with SW region
 - Dividing line: horizontal line running from the southern tip of Lake Tahoe
 - Consider adding Mountain region (CO, WY, MT, ID)
- Examples of where this has been done well:
 - [NCA1](#) use of regions and megaregions

Consider Alternate Definitions for Sectors:

- **Why this is important:** People tend to be inclusive and cross-cutting in how they see sectors. The sector names in the GCRA do not always capture how people view their world.
- Suggestions:
 - Consider alternative cross-sector groupings, especially for use in regional chapters
 - E.g., business, labor, tourism, energy-water-land, fisheries
 - Designate coasts and oceans as sectors, rather than regions
- Examples of where this has been done well:
 - [Vermont Climate Assessment](#) (e.g., chapters on Recreation and Tourism; Food)
 - [Risky Business: Midwest](#) (Agriculture)